

Public Release

The Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Food and Nutrition today announced its policy for free and reduced price meals for children unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and the Afterschool Care Snack Program.

State and Local school officials have adopted the following family size and income criteria for determining eligibility:

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES
Effective 7-1-2004 to 6-30-2005

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Free Meals</u>					<u>Reduced Price Meals</u>				
	<u>Yearly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Every two weeks</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Twice a Month</u>	<u>Yearly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Every two weeks</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Twice a Month</u>
1	\$12,103	\$ 1,009	\$ 466	\$ 233	\$ 505	\$17,224	\$ 1,436	\$ 663	\$ 332	\$ 718
2	16,237	1,354	625	313	677	23,107	1,926	889	445	963
3	20,371	1,698	784	392	849	28,990	2,416	1,115	558	1,208
4	24,505	2,043	943	472	1,022	34,873	2,907	1,342	671	1,454
5	28,639	2,387	1,102	551	1,194	40,756	3,397	1,568	784	1,699
6	32,773	2,732	1,261	631	1,366	46,639	3,887	1,794	897	1,944
7	36,907	3,076	1,420	710	1,538	52,522	4,377	2,021	1,011	2,189
8	41,041	3,421	1,579	790	1,711	58,405	4,868	2,247	1,124	2,434
For each additional family member add:	+4,134	+345	+159	+80	+173	+ 5,883	+491	+227	+114	+246

Families whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible either for free meals or for reduced price meals. Food Stamp households, Family Investment Program (FIP) Households, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) households are eligible for free meals. Most Food Stamp Households will receive a letter from the Department of Human Services which will qualify the children listed on the letter for free meals. Sign the letter and deliver it to the school and the children listed will receive free meals at school. These households do not complete an application form.

Households not receiving food stamps or FIP/TANF must list: names of all household members; the social security number of the adult household member signing the application or indicate that this household member does not possess a social security number; the amount and source of the income received by each household member; and the signature of an adult household member certifying that the information provided is correct.

Self-employed farmers and self-employed business persons who are not able to reasonably project current income may report net taxable business income shown on their preceding year's 1040 Federal Income Tax form.

Application forms are being made available to all homes by local school districts. Additional copies are available at the principal's office in each school. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year.

Schools will use the information on applications to decide if children should get free or reduced price meals. They may inform officials connected with Title I assessment, the National Assessment of Educational Progress and Carl Perkins Vocational Education whether children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals. These groups will use this

information for funding and/or evaluation purposes. Names, eligibility status and other information provided on the application or obtained through direct certification or verification may be disclosed to certain Federal, State or local agencies as authorized by the National School Lunch Act.

To discourage the possibility of misrepresentation, the application forms contain a statement above the space for signature certifying that all information furnished in the application is true and correct. The names of all persons living in the household and the social security number of either the household member who signs the application or that of the parent or guardian who is the primary wage earner must be entered. An additional statement is added to warn that the application is being made in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, that school officials may verify the information in the application, and that deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable State and Federal criminal statutes.

In certain cases, foster children are also eligible for these benefits. If a family has foster children living with them and wishes to apply for such meals for them, instructions for making application for such children are contained on the application form.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Under the provisions of the policy school officials will review applications and determine eligibility. If parents are dissatisfied with the ruling of the officials, they may wish to discuss the decisions with the determining official on an informal basis. If they wish to make a formal appeal, a request may be made either orally or in writing to the school's designated hearing official. The policy statement on file at the school contains an outline of the hearing procedure.

If a family member becomes unemployed, if family income is otherwise significantly changed, or if family size changes, the family should contact the school to file a new application. Such changes may make the children of the family eligible for reduced price or for free meals if the family income falls at or below the levels shown above.

Each school and the central office has a copy of the complete local school district policy for free and reduced price meals which may be reviewed by any interested party.